



Release: April 25, 2003
Contact: Jim Grebing at 573-751-9065 or
Randall Clark at 573-751-8914

Missouri Department of
Economic Development
P.O. Box 1157
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
www.missouridevelopment.org

Missouri Unemployment Rate Holds Steady in March

Missouri's unemployment rate remained stable in March, providing yet another indication that the state's economic climate is on the upswing.

The state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate edged up a tenth of a point to 4.8 percent in March, which is seven-tenths of a point below what it was last March and a full point below the national rate of 5.8 percent.

"The major decline in our unemployment rate that we saw in January and February held steady in March, which is great news," said Joseph L. Driskill, director of DED. "This means Missouri is beginning to emerge from the national recession and that our economic climate is continuing to improve. It also means that Missourians are getting employed at greater rates and keeping their jobs."

Missouri's unadjusted unemployment rate fell two-tenths of a point in March to 5.0 percent from 5.2 percent in February. Compared to a year ago, the unemployment rate has dropped by seven-tenths of a point. The state's unadjusted rate in March was 1.2 percent below the national rate of 6.2 percent.

Employment in March increased by less than the usual seasonal amount. Missouri non-farm payroll employment increased by 10,900 jobs, not seasonally adjusted, largely on the basis of seasonal improvement in construction, leisure and hospitality, and other industries. On a seasonally adjusted basis, however, employment slipped back by 5,600 to 2,632,500. National unadjusted payroll employment increased by nearly 500,000, while the seasonally adjusted measure slipped back by 108,000 to 130,408,000.

The largest seasonally adjusted decrease in Missouri occurred in the trade, transportation, and utilities supersector (-6,400 jobs) followed by government's loss of 1,300 jobs. These decreases were partly offset by a 3,500-job increase in the professional and business services sector.

The greater detail available in the not-seasonally-adjusted data gives a better indication of the changes that occurred in March. More than two-thirds of the decrease in trade, transportation, and utilities was in retail trade, which has yet to rebound from the normal winter downturn.

In the professional and business services sector, gains were spread through a number of industries, including management of companies (up 1,200) and services to buildings (up 1,800). Employment in the leisure and hospitality sector was up by 6,100, about the expected seasonal gain. Most industries in this sector reported higher employment. Construction employment was up by 4,000 jobs over the month, slightly above the expected seasonal gain, while manufacturing employment was little changed.

Since March 2002, non-farm payroll employment has decreased by 66,200 jobs, including 14,100 in manufacturing, 5,900 in construction, 14,400 in professional and business services, and 14,200 in state government.

Some industries have grown over the year. These include food manufacturing (1,200 jobs); nondurable goods wholesaling (1,900); food stores (1,700); credit intermediation (1,500); hospitals and doctors offices (5,700 together); amusement, gambling and recreation (2,100); and religious, grant-making, civic and professional organizations (1,500.)

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MISSOURI UNEMPLOYMENT RATES
FOR METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS (MSAs), LABOR MARKET AREAS (LMAs), AND COUNTIES
CURRENT MONTH (MARCH 2003), PREVIOUS TWO MONTHS (JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2003), AND YEAR AGO (MARCH 2002)

	MAR 2003	FEB 2003	JAN 2003	MAR 2002		MAR 2003	FEB 2003	JAN 2003	MAR 2002
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U.S. (not seasonally adjusted)	6.2	6.4	6.5	6.1	Atchison	2.8	3.4	3.6	3.1
MISSOURI	5.0	5.2	5.7	5.7	Audrain	5.5	5.4	5.9	5.6
ST. LOUIS MSA	5.2	5.3	5.7	5.7	Barton	3.9	3.9	4.6	4.1
Franklin	5.6	6.0	6.4	6.1	Bates	6.7	6.8	8.3	7.4
Jefferson	5.4	5.5	6.1	5.9	Benton	7.4	8.4	9.4	8.8
Lincoln	6.1	6.3	6.6	6.1	Caldwell	7.4	8.0	8.6	8.2
St. Charles	3.6	3.7	4.0	4.0	Carroll	5.7	5.5	6.4	6.2
St. Louis County	4.2	4.2	4.6	4.8	Cedar	6.7	6.6	7.6	6.9
Warren	6.2	6.5	6.8	6.5	Chariton	5.7	5.9	7.3	6.9
St. Louis City	7.8	7.7	8.6	9.4	Clark	7.5	8.0	9.0	8.4
KANSAS CITY MSA	5.3	5.4	5.7	5.5	Cooper	3.8	3.9	4.6	4.7
Cass	4.5	4.4	5.1	4.4	Crawford	7.3	7.8	8.5	8.0
Clay	3.8	3.8	4.2	4.1	Dade	3.8	4.1	4.5	6.0
Clinton	5.5	5.6	5.8	5.6	Dallas	5.9	6.0	6.7	7.7
Jackson	5.6	5.6	6.3	6.1	Daviess	5.5	6.0	6.2	6.5
Lafayette	4.8	4.6	5.4	6.0	DeKalb	6.2	5.8	6.2	6.3
Platte	3.5	3.5	4.0	4.1	Dent	7.0	7.4	8.7	7.6
Ray	5.5	5.0	5.4	5.3	Douglas	8.8	9.7	11.2	12.8
SPRINGFIELD MSA	3.5	3.8	4.2	4.5	Dunklin	7.9	8.1	9.1	8.6
Christian	4.5	5.2	5.9	5.1	Gasconade	5.7	5.7	6.5	6.2
Greene	3.3	3.4	3.8	4.2	Gentry	3.3	3.5	3.7	6.0
Webster	3.8	4.2	4.4	6.0	Grundy	5.6	5.0	5.8	6.1
JOPLIN MSA	4.7	4.7	5.3	5.1	Harrison	5.3	5.9	5.7	5.5
Jasper	4.4	4.4	5.0	5.2	Henry	7.5	7.5	6.8	6.5
Newton	5.2	5.1	5.9	4.8	Hickory	9.4	9.3	10.6	7.8
COLUMBIA MSA	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.2	Holt	5.3	6.0	6.2	5.1
Boone	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.2	Howard	4.4	4.1	4.8	6.0
ST. JOSEPH MSA	5.5	5.8	6.2	6.2	Iron	8.5	8.6	9.7	9.9
Andrew	4.8	5.1	5.4	5.5	Johnson	3.6	3.5	4.1	4.4
Buchanan	5.6	5.9	6.4	6.3	Knox	4.4	4.0	4.1	4.6
ADAIR-SCHUYLER LMA	4.3	3.8	3.8	4.6	Laclede	9.4	9.2	6.1	6.7
Adair	3.8	3.3	3.3	4.1	Lewis	5.0	5.2	5.6	5.0
Schuyler	7.6	6.9	7.0	7.5	Linn	7.1	7.6	10.8	6.1
BUTLER-CARTER-RIPLEY LMA	5.4	5.5	6.2	6.0	Livingston	4.7	4.6	4.4	3.8
Butler	5.1	5.2	5.8	5.4	McDonald	5.7	5.7	6.1	5.3
Carter	7.4	6.7	7.4	8.5	Macon	6.2	6.2	7.5	7.7
Ripley	5.7	6.2	7.2	7.0	Madison	8.4	8.1	8.8	10.0
CAMDEN-MILLER LMA	7.3	8.7	10.6	9.0	Mercer	8.0	7.1	7.4	5.0
Camden	7.2	8.5	10.4	8.4	Monroe	7.7	7.6	8.0	7.3
Miller	7.4	9.1	11.0	9.9	Montgomery	7.4	7.0	7.2	6.3
CAPE GIRARDEAU-SCOTT-NEW MADRID LMA	5.2	5.3	6.0	5.8	Morgan	7.5	8.6	9.8	9.5
Bollinger	6.6	7.1	7.0	8.8	Nodaway	2.2	2.2	2.5	2.3
Cape Girardeau	3.6	3.6	4.3	4.1	Ozark	5.9	6.8	7.7	7.2
Mississippi	6.4	7.2	8.1	8.4	Pemiscot	10.6	10.6	11.7	10.5
New Madrid	10.4	11.0	12.7	9.2	Perry	3.2	3.4	3.8	3.7
Scott	5.2	4.9	5.6	6.0	Pettis	5.1	5.6	6.2	7.0
COLE-CALLAWAY-MONITEAU LMA	3.2	3.4	4.0	3.6	Pike	5.2	5.4	5.6	6.3
Callaway	3.6	3.8	4.3	3.9	Polk	3.8	3.9	4.2	4.3
Cole	2.8	2.8	3.4	3.0	Pulaski	4.3	4.6	5.2	5.9
Moniteau	3.5	3.9	4.6	4.6	Putnam	8.4	7.8	7.8	5.8
Osage	4.3	4.4	5.4	5.0	Randolph	4.9	5.2	5.4	6.0
HOWELL-OREGON-SHANNON LMA	5.2	5.3	5.9	5.8	Reynolds	10.0	10.8	12.3	10.2
Howell	4.7	4.8	5.5	5.3	St. Clair	7.5	7.0	6.7	6.7
Oregon	4.5	3.9	4.4	5.2	Ste. Genevieve	5.3	5.8	6.4	6.4
Shannon	7.9	9.1	9.5	8.8	Saline	4.9	5.1	5.3	6.9
LAWRENCE-BARRY LMA	4.8	5.2	5.9	5.4	Scotland	5.3	5.5	5.0	6.8
Barry	4.9	5.4	6.4	5.1	Shelby	6.7	6.7	7.4	8.3
Lawrence	4.7	5.0	5.4	5.7	Stoddard	5.9	6.6	7.6	7.9
MARION-RALLS LMA	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.8	Stone	13.7	19.9	22.8	18.1
Marion	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.7	Sullivan	11.4	11.8	13.3	4.1
Ralls	6.6	6.4	6.3	5.9	Taney	11.9	17.2	20.0	16.1
PHHELPS-MARIES LMA	3.3	3.6	4.1	3.8	Texas	7.9	8.4	8.8	8.2
Maries	3.5	4.0	4.9	5.0	Vernon	4.7	4.5	5.0	6.0
Phelps	3.3	3.5	4.0	3.6	Wayne	11.0	11.9	13.2	12.6
ST. FRANCOIS-WASHINGTON LMA	7.6	7.9	9.1	8.9	Worth	3.3	4.2	4.8	7.0
St. Francois	6.7	6.9	8.2	8.0	Wright	7.2	6.7	7.4	10.6
Washington	9.9	10.4	11.3	11.4					

NOTE: DATA FOR COUNTIES WITHIN MSAs/LMAs ARE DISAGGREGATED FROM MSA/LMA TOTALS.

NOTE: SUBSTATE AREA DATA FOR 2002 HAVE BEEN REVISED BUT ARE PROVISIONAL: NOT YET OFFICIAL AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE.
PRODUCED BY MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, MERIC, IN COOPERATION WITH U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS